

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the present Abstract of the Disclosure with the following amended Abstract of the Disclosure (a clean version of the new Abstract to be substituted into the application is attached hereto).

A composite polymer electrolyte membrane is formed from a first polymer electrolyte comprising a sulfonated polyarylene polymer and a second polymer electrolyte comprising another hydrocarbon polymer electrolyte. In the first polymer electrolyte, 2–70 mol% constitutes an aromatic compound unit with an electron-attractive group in its principal chain, while 30–98 mol% constitutes an aromatic compound unit without an electron-attractive group in its principal chain. The second polymer electrolyte is a sulfonated polyether or sulfonated polysulfide polymer electrolyte. ~~The composite polymer electrolyte membrane is formed from a matrix comprising the first polymer electrolyte selected from among sulfonated polyarylene polymers and having an ion exchange capacity in excess of 1.5 meq/g but less than 3.0 meq/g, which is supported on a reinforcement comprising the second polymer electrolyte having an ion exchange capacity in excess of 0.5 meq/g but less than 1.5 meq/g. The polymer electrolyte membrane comprises a polyarylene polymer sulfonated so that the Q value is within the range 0.09–0.18 C/cm².~~